

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor

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**GOVERNOR KAINE ANNOUNCES AWARD OF
HEALTH TECHNOLOGY GRANTS**

~ Grants focus on expanding use of electronic health records ~

GATE CITY — Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced the award of three health information technology grants to projects designed to expand the use of electronic health records across Virginia: MedVirginia in Central Virginia, the Community Care Network of Virginia in Southside Virginia, and CareSpark in Southwest Virginia. Each program has been awarded \$250,000 through a grant program initiated by Governor Kaine and endorsed by the 2006 General Assembly.

“Health information technology has the potential to significantly improve quality of care in Virginia, holding-down patient costs, protecting confidentiality, and reducing medical errors,” Governor Kaine said. “Yet we know up-front costs to transition to electronic health records can sometimes appear daunting, so we are excited that a relatively modest investment from the Commonwealth can help advance this important technology.”

MedVirginia, based in Richmond, proposed a project focused on improving medication management for state government employees. CareSpark, a regional health information network based in Southwest Virginia and reaching into northeast Tennessee, is working to provide accurate up-to-date information electronically to doctors across the Tri-Cities region. The statewide Community Care Network project will work with Piedmont Access To Health Services (PATHS), located in Danville and Martinsville, and the Piedmont Community Services Board, to establish a “Community Care Record” to improve primary care and mental health outcomes for patients in that community.

Last August, Governor Kaine created the Health IT Advisory Council and charged it with recommending investments to encourage the transition to electronic medical records. More than 60 project proposals were received and reviewed by the Council and staff. The Council developed selection criteria based on business case, physician interest, and privacy concerns. The Council will meet this spring to determine how it will recommend awarding the remaining \$700,000 of the \$1.4 million allocated by the 2006 General Assembly.

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